

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for aiding in the development of displayed content, said system comprising:
 - a user terminal having a first display device;
 - 5 a central computer;
 - a communication network, said central computer communicatively connected to said user terminal via said communication network, such that said central computer may cause content to be displayed by said first display device;
 - a computer readable medium communicatively connected to said central computer, said
 - 10 computer readable medium encoded with content information and content format information; and
 - a developer terminal having a second display device, said developer terminal communicatively connected to said central computer such that said developer terminal may access said content information and said content format information,
 - 15 wherein said second display device is configured to display a user interface having:
 - a data input tool corresponding to a content feature; and
 - a preview image corresponding to an image of said content as it would appear at a current stage of development, said preview image having an area corresponding to said content feature,
 - 20 wherein said data input tool is configured to associate a content piece with said content feature, and
 - wherein said area of said preview image indicates whether said content piece has been associated with said content feature.
2. The system according to claim 1, wherein said content piece is one of a text string, a text file,
- 25 an image, an image file, a video clip, an animated clip and an audio clip.

3. The system according to claim 1, wherein said data input tool is one of a pull-down menu, a text bar, and a selectable icon.
4. The system according to claim 1, wherein said user interface is configured to retrieve said content piece from a computer readable medium encoded with a plurality of content pieces.
5. The system according to claim 4, wherein said plurality of content pieces are organized into groups in a data storage structure.
6. The system according to claim 4, wherein said data storage structure is a database and said groups are database records.
7. The system according to claim 1, said data input tool further configured to display an available content piece that a developer can selectively associate with said content feature.
8. The system according to claim 1, said preview image further including a feature manipulation tool associated with said content feature, said feature manipulation tool configured to allow said developer to change at least one of a size and a location of said content feature.
9. The system according to claim 1, wherein said preview image is configured to display said content piece in said area corresponding to said content feature after said content piece has been associated with said content feature by said developer.
10. The system according to claim 1, wherein said data input tool is configured to accept a new content piece entered by said developer.
11. The system according to claim 10, wherein said user interface is configured to store said new content piece in a computer readable medium encoded with a plurality of content pieces.

12. The system according to claim 1, wherein said developer associates said data input tool with said content feature by selecting said area of said preview image.

13. The system according to claim 1, wherein said data input tool is displayed within a development pane and said preview image is displayed within a preview pane.

5 14. The system according to claim 1, wherein said data input tool is displayed in a portion of said preview image.

15. The system according to claim 1, wherein said area of said preview image indicates whether said content piece has been associated with said content feature by displaying said content piece when said content piece has been associated with said content feature and displaying a data input tool when said content piece has not been associated with said content feature.

16. The system according to claim 1, wherein said preview image is displayed according to a selected format and said content feature is associated with said format.

17. The system according to claim 16, further including a plurality of content features, the type and number of said content features being determined by said selected format.

15 18. The system according to claim 1, wherein said developer terminal is communicatively connected to said central computer via said communication network.

19. A system for aiding in the development of displayed content, said system comprising:
a user terminal having a first display device;

a central computer;

20 a communication network, said central computer communicatively connected to said user terminal via said communication network, such that said central computer may cause content to be displayed by said first display device;

a computer readable medium communicatively connected to said central computer, said computer readable medium encoded with content information and content format information;

a developer terminal having a second display device, said developer terminal communicatively connected to said central computer such that said developer terminal may access said content information and said content format information, wherein said second display device is configured to display:

a preview pane containing a preview image corresponding to an image of said content as it would appear at a current stage of development, said preview image having an area corresponding to a content feature and said preview image being displayed according to a selected format;

a plurality of content features associated with said selected format; and

a development pane containing at least one data input tool corresponding to said plurality of content features,

wherein said data input tool is configured to associate a content piece with said content feature,

wherein said preview pane and said development pane are simultaneously displayed, and wherein said area of said preview image indicates whether said content piece has been associated with said content feature.

20. A user interface for developing content, said user interface being displayed to a developer on a display device associated with a developer terminal, the user interface comprising:
- a data input tool corresponding to a content feature; and
 - a preview image corresponding to an image of said content as it would appear at a current stage of development, said preview image having an area corresponding to said content feature, wherein
- said data input tool is configured to associate a content piece with said content feature, and

said area of said preview image indicates whether said content piece has been associated with said content feature.

21. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said content piece is one of a text string, a text file, an image, an image file, a video clip, an animated clip and an audio clip.

5 22. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said data input tool is one of a pull-down menu, a text bar, and a selectable icon.

23. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said user interface is configured to retrieve said content piece from a computer readable medium encoded with a plurality of content pieces.

10 24. The user interface according to claim 23, wherein said plurality of content pieces are organized into groups in a data storage structure.

25. The user interface according to claim 23, wherein said data storage structure is a database and said groups are database records.

15 26. The user interface according to claim 20, said data input tool further configured to display an available content piece that a developer can selectively associate with said content feature.

27. The user interface according to claim 20, said preview image further including a feature manipulation tool associated with said content feature, said feature manipulation tool configured to allow said developer to change at least one of a size and a location of said content feature.

20 28. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said preview image is configured to display said content piece in said area corresponding to said content feature after said content piece has been associated with said content feature by said developer.

29. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said data input tool is configured to accept a new content piece entered by said developer.

30. The user interface according to claim 29, wherein said user interface is configured to store said new content piece in a computer readable medium encoded with a plurality of content
5 pieces.

31. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said developer associates said data input tool with said content feature by selecting said area of said preview image.

32. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said data input tool is displayed within a development pane and said preview image is displayed within a preview pane.

33. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said data input tool is displayed in a portion of said preview image.

34. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said area of said preview image indicates whether said content piece has been associated with said content feature by displaying said content piece when said content piece has been associated with said content feature and displaying a data input tool when said content piece has not been associated with said content
5 feature.

35. The user interface according to claim 20, wherein said preview image is displayed according to a selected format and said content feature is associated with said format.

36. The user interface according to claim 35, further including a plurality of content features, the
20 type and number of said content features being determined by said selected format.

37. A graphical user interface for developing content, said graphical user interface being displayed to a developer on a display device associated with a developer terminal, the graphical user interface comprising:

a preview pane containing a preview image corresponding to an image of said content as it would appear at a current stage of development, said preview image having an area corresponding to a content feature and said preview image being displayed according to a selected format;

5 a plurality of content features associated with said selected format; and
a development pane containing at least one data input tool corresponding to said plurality of content features, wherein

said data input tool is configured to associate a content piece with said content feature, said preview pane and said development pane are simultaneously displayed, and

10 said area of said preview image indicates whether said content piece has been associated with said content feature.

38. A method for developing content, said method comprising:

storing a plurality of content pieces in a content piece data storage structure;

storing a plurality of content formats in a format data storage structure, said plurality of
15 content formats each being associated with at least one content feature;

selecting a content format from among said plurality of content formats;

displaying a preview image corresponding to an image of said content at a current stage of development, said preview image being displayed according to said selected content format and having an area for displaying each of said at least one content feature;

20 simultaneously displaying a data input tool corresponding to said at least one content feature associated with said selected content format;

associating said associated content feature with a content piece from among said plurality of content pieces; and

25 altering said preview image to indicate that said associated content piece has been associated with said associated content feature.

39. The method according to claim 38, further including entering a new content piece using said data input tool and storing said new content piece in said content piece data storage structure.

40. The method according to claim 38, wherein said selected content format is associated with a plurality of content features, and further including selecting said area of said preview image
5 corresponding to said at least one of said plurality of content features to cause said data input tool to correspond to at least one of said plurality of content features.

41. The method according to claim 38, wherein said selected content format attributes a size to said area of said preview image in which said associated content feature, and further including altering said content piece to be displayed within said area.

42. The method according to claim 38, wherein said preview image is displayed in a preview pane and said data input tool is displayed in a separate development pane.

43. The method according to claim 38, wherein said data input tool is displayed within said preview image.

44. The method according to claim 38, further including storing said content on a computer readable memory associated with said central computer and transmitting said content to a user terminal for display to a user.

45. A method for developing advertising content for a product, said method comprising:
by a developer, selecting a format in which said advertising content is to be displayed;
displaying a preview image of said advertising content in said format, said format
20 corresponding to a content feature that may be associated with one of a plurality of content pieces;
simultaneously displaying a selectable list of said plurality of content pieces;
by said developer, selecting one of said plurality of content pieces;
associating said selected content piece with said content feature; and

displaying said selected content piece in said preview image, wherein
 said content feature is one of a product image, product description information, product
 pricing information, and product availability information.

46. The method according to claim 45, wherein said content feature is a product image and said
 5 selected content piece is an image file, and further including accessing a computer readable
 medium encoded with a plurality of images of said product and retrieving said image file.

47. The method according to claim 45, wherein said selected content piece is a selected text file
 describing one of a feature of said product, a price of said product or availability of said
 product, and further including accessing a computer readable medium encoded with a
 10 plurality of text files and retrieving said selected text file.

48. The method according to claim 45, further including storing said advertisement content on a
 computer readable medium after said content piece has been associated with said content
 feature.

49. The method according to claim 45, wherein said preview image is displayed in a preview
 15 pane and said selectable list is displayed in a separate development pane.